

EDUCATION  
AND  
APPRENTICESHIP  
IN  
SIXTEENTH-CENTURY  
BRISTOL

JEAN VANES



# BRISTOL BRANCH OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

## LOCAL HISTORY PAMPHLETS

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*Education and Apprenticeship in Sixteenth-Century Bristol* by Dr Jean Vanes is the fifty-second pamphlet to be published by the Bristol Branch of the Historical Association. Dr. Vanes is a leading authority on sixteen-century Bristol, and her publications include *Documents relating to the trade of Bristol in the sixteenth century* (Bristol Record Society, 1979) and an earlier pamphlet in this series — *The Port of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century*.

This pamphlet is based on the F.C. Jones Memorial Lecture which Dr Vanes delivered in the University of Bristol in May 1981. A few additions have been made, and references are given to the sources.

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The next pamphlet in the series will be Professor Charles Tomlinson's study of the poet *Isaac Rosenberg of Bristol*.

The Appeal Fund which the Branch launched at the end of 1981 in order to put the pamphlets on a sound financial basis is still open. Donations should be sent to Mrs E. Venning, Pamphlet Appeal Fund, Bristol Record Office, The Council House, Bristol BS1 5TR.

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*The illustration on the front cover shows the entrance to the old Bristol Grammar School, formerly St. Bartholomew's Hospital.*

# EDUCATION AND APPRENTICESHIP IN TUDOR BRISTOL

The Frederick Creech Jones Memorial Lecture  
delivered in the University of Bristol, May 1981

It is a great privilege and a great pleasure to me to be giving the Frederick Creech Jones Memorial Lecture on the history of Bristol this evening. It seems to me entirely appropriate that I should be talking to you about the history of education here when we remember with gratitude his enthusiasm for the history of Bristol and also all the many people in the past who have contributed to the advancement of learning in this city which gave me my own early education.

In the mellow sunshine of early October, 1559, a bright young Englishman travelled the road from Lisbon to Seville. He was neatly dressed and riding a gaily caparisoned mule, a sword at his side and at his belt a "budget" — a leather wallet in which he carried his cash, his book of accounts and his own few daily necessities. The young man was John Frampton,<sup>1</sup> son of a clothier of Wells in Somerset, apprenticed on Boxing Day, 1540, to John Cutt of Bristol and Joan his wife.<sup>2</sup> He had arrived in Lisbon a few weeks earlier in the ship *Jesus* and had sold the cloth — Bridgwaters, Readings and Manchester cottons — entrusted to him as factor for several Bristol men, for 2,100 ducats (some £642). This money he carried in the form of Bills of Exchange which he planned to deposit with Hugh Tipton, another Bristol man then Governor of the Andalusia Company and Consul of the English in Seville.<sup>3</sup>

- 1 L.C. Wroth, "An Elizabethan Merchant and man of letters: John Frampton," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, xvii (1954) 299–314.
- 2 E. Ralph and N.M. Hardwick, *Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book 1532–1565, Part II 1542–1522*, B(ristol) R(ecord) S(ociety), xxxiii (1980) 101.
- 3 G. Schanz, *Englische Handelspolitik gegen Ende des Mittelalters* (Leipzig, 1881) 494.

From there Frampton journeyed on to Malaga in search of a return cargo, probably raisins, wine and oil. However, at Malaga he was seized by the Inquisition, brought back to the Castle of Triana in Seville and his sea chest taken from the *Jesus*, then lying at Cadiz. There the Inquisitors found a copy of Cato in English (harmless enough one would think) which Frampton said he had, "to pass the time at sea in reading of it." He was cruelly questioned, charged with heresy and eventually sentenced to perpetual imprisonment. After two years he was released but he was unable to secure the return of the confiscated goods.<sup>4</sup> After several fruitless years, he returned to live in London where, during the late 1570s, he produced six books, all translations from Spanish and all designed to help prospective settlers in the New World and Far East. For obvious reasons, these books have been called "Frampton's Revenge."

The first book, *Joyfull Newes out of the newe founde World* described all the beneficial herbs to be found there.<sup>5</sup> The others were a translation from Marco Polo; Spanish sailing directions for the West Indies; an account of the Portuguese voyages to the Far East, and the translation of a famous Spanish manual of navigation, Pedro de Medina's *Arte de Navegar*.<sup>6</sup> A manuscript of his *Discoverie of the Countries of Tartaria* was taken by Pett and Jackman on their 1580 voyage in search of a North-east passage. As Frampton rightly explained, "navigation is in as like sort necessary for the mariner as accidens is for the grammarian."<sup>7</sup>

From all this, it would seem probable that, before he was apprenticed at the age of 15, John Frampton had received at least the early years of a grammar school education, either in Wells, where there was a long tradition of humanist grammar teaching at the Cathedral,<sup>8</sup> or in Bristol where the tradition of grammar teaching extended back for more than a century<sup>9</sup>

- 4 J. Vanes, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century*, University of London Ph.D. Thesis (1975) 352-4.
- 5 J.B. Ross and M.M. McLaughlin (eds.) *The Portable Renaissance Reader* (1977) 152-5, an extract about tobacco.
- 6 Earlier translated by the Bristol merchant, Roger Barlow, *A Brief Summe of Geographie*, E.G.R. Taylor (ed.) Hakluyt Society, 2nd ser. Ixix (1931).
- 7 L.C. Wroth, *op. cit.* 312-14.
- 8 N. Orme, *Education in the West of England, 1066-1548* (University of Exeter, 1976) 80-7.
- 9 See pp. 5-7.

John Frampton's "budget," his account books, his bills of exchange and the books he published later show why, by the sixteenth century, education was so necessary and not only for the merchant. All the élite trades of tailors, vintners, drapers, and even bakers sent some of their apprentices abroad for experience and expected their more important members to be literate.<sup>10</sup> The London Goldsmiths' Company accepted no apprentice "without he can read and write," the Barber-surgeons demanded Latin and the Scriveners laid it down that any boy unable to read and write should be sent to grammar school "unto such time as he have or by reasonable capacity may have positive grammar."<sup>11</sup> In Bristol, clauses about schooling or about years of training overseas are often included in the apprentice's indenture.<sup>12</sup> Wise parents sometimes kept their options open. William Tyndall's will stated that his wife, Jane, should keep the children, "Thomas to the scole, Johan and Faith to service in the house and to use their needill, finding them meate, drinke and clothe(s) with other thinges necessarie until they be of th'age of xvjne yeres. At which tyme I will that Thomas shall be bound apprentice to such misterie or science as he shall be most apte, orels kept to his lerning in Oxforde if he be apte and have mynde there unto."<sup>13</sup> Nicholas Orme comments that "Schooling will appear as only one of the strands of education and one which in any case involved only a minority of people." Learning included "the acquisition of social habits, the appreciation of nature and the mastery of trades."<sup>14</sup>

The literate apprentice was able to learn, not only from his master, but also from the printed works which, in this first great age of the text book, were being produced on every aspect of life and labour,<sup>15</sup> while the advent of cheaper paper later in the sixteenth century when it began to be manufactured in England,

- 10 E. Ralph and N.M. Hardwick, 26-7, 102, 103, 104, 113, 115, 121, 122, 127, 128, 130, 131, 134, 142, 143, 146, 147, 149.
- 11 J. Simon, *Education and Society in Tudor England* (Cambridge, 1966) 15, 18. B. Winchester, *Tudor Family Portrait* (1955). S.L. Thrupp, *The Merchant Class of Medieval London* (1948) 155-61.
- 12 E. Ralph and N.M. Hardwick, 88, 111, 124, 129, 130, 131.
- 13 B(ristol) R(ecord) O(ffice) 04421(1)a, The Great Orphan Book, 283-4, and see also 255v-256v, 338r-v, 340v, 389r-393r.
- 14 N. Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (1973) 1.
- 15 K. Charlton, *Education in Renaissance England* (1965) 253-96.

made the keeping of business records more widespread. While a few Bristol men, such as John Frampton, contributed to this literary explosion, others no doubt benefited from it. Bristol men were frequently in London on business, commercial, legal or Parliamentary, and it was said they were always to be found at the *Three Cups* in Bread Street from which the carriers set out for the West Country every Saturday morning.<sup>16</sup> It seems reasonable to suppose that a good many books were brought to the city, either by the travellers themselves or in bundles in the carrier's cart. Among John White's goods when he died in 1559 were "50 great books of Scripture and the law and 20 small books, English and Latin of divers sorts, a Bible, a Testament, a book of St. Austyne" and also "an old Bible, a Herball" and "a Cronacle of Fabians makinge."<sup>17</sup> There are also occasional references to bookbinders, such as Francis Busserd in 1546 and Philip Scapulis who, when he died in 1590, left all his tools to his former apprentice, Richard Foorde.<sup>18</sup>

Books were still not used, though, for the very young child who probably learned his letters at home or at a petty-school from a hornbook. This was a flat piece of metal or wood to which was fastened a parchment with the alphabet in upper and lower case letters on it, with some syllables or short words, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and sometimes the Ten Commandments. Over the parchment was tacked a piece of transparent horn and a handle was attached.<sup>19</sup> This was followed by the Primer, its first page resembling the hornbook. By the 1540s Henry VIII had prescribed a printed Primer in English, with the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, the Ten Commandments and the Catechism, to be used with the English Bible in all schools.<sup>20</sup> At the petty school most of the teaching was oral, but the child might learn to read, write and count and in the final year those who were apt might even start to learn the rudiments of Latin grammar. Here and in the lower forms of the grammar school the medieval Latin grammars, such as those of Donatus and Villadei, were gradually

16 H.C.A. 14/1/39. J. Crofts, *Pack Horse, Wagon and Post* (1967), 7, 43.

17 L.J. Upton Way, "An Inventory of the goods of John White of Brystowe taken in 1559," *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, xlivi (1921) 267-78.

18 E. Ralph and N.M. Hardwick, 46. B.R.O. 04421(1)a 387.

19 G.A. Plimpton, *The Education of Shakespeare* (1933) 47-52.

20 D.W. Sylvester, *Educational Documents 800-1816* (1970) 78-82.

replaced by John Anwykyll's *Compendium Totius Grammatice* (1483) and John Holt's *Lac Puerorum or Mylke for Children* (1479). These were followed by the grammars of Stanbridge and Whittington, but the grammar book chosen by Henry VIII to be used in all schools alongside the Primer and the English Bible was the one prepared by Colet and Lily and revised by Erasmus for St. Paul's School.<sup>21</sup>

In Bristol there were several petty schools of this kind and girls as well as boys might attend them. There is evidence of teaching in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Churches of All Saints', Redcliffe, St. Ewen's and St. Nicholas' and also at the Cathedral, before 1540 a College of Augustinian Canons, though it may have been little more than reading and song for a few boys. From the Middle Ages there are references to schools in Wine Street, St. Nicholas Street and on the Quay, in Redcliffe parish, over New Gate, over Frome Gate and at Westbury-on-Trym.<sup>22</sup> In 1574 even the small village of Henbury, north of Bristol, had its teacher, James Nash, who for a small fee taught some of the children to read and write.<sup>23</sup> The College at Westbury was founded in the fifteenth century by Bishop Carpenter and in the early sixteenth century was presided over by the eminent humanist scholar, John Barlow.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the most interesting of these early schools was that set up by Robert Londe in a chamber over Newgate in the early part of the fifteenth century. Among his lesson notes for 1427 and 1428 is a set of "Vulgaria" or sentences in English and Latin. The Master would dictate the English sentence which the pupils then turned into Latin which the Master compared with his own.

This was called "making latins" and it became a very dull and

21 Foster Watson, *The English Grammar Schools to 1660: their curriculum and practice* (Cambridge, 1908) 232-59. K. Charlton, *op.cit.* 101-8. E. Pafort, "A Group of Early Tudor School Books," *The Library*, 4th series, xxvi (1946) 227-61. Craig R. Thompson, "Schools in Tudor England," in L.B. Wright and V. La Mar (eds.) *Life and Letters in Tudor and Stuart England* (New York, 1962) 291-7.

22 N. Orme, *Education in the West of England*. A.F. Leach, "The Schools of Bristol," *Victoria County History, Gloucestershire*, ii, 355-8, 360-6. A.F. Leach, *Educational Charters and Documents* (1911) 98-101.

23 P. McGrath and M. Williams, *Bristol Wills 1546-1593* (Bristol, 1975) 16-17.

24 N. Orme, *Education in the West Of England*, 182-4. C1/879/46. Robert Thorne suggested that John Barlow should advise in the making of the statutes for the Grammar School.

stereotyped exercise in later centuries. Robert Londe's own sentences are the earliest yet known and, in their attempt to capture the interest of the class by their allusions to topical events and everyday life, they anticipate the *De Copia* and the *Colloquies* of Erasmus and the dialogues of Vives.

For example —

Y kan ryde to Bathe in a day and als far beyond for nede.

To Bristow, the wyche ys an havyn towne comyth moo strangerys than to Covyntre, the wych is no havyn towne, notwithstandingyng that both bethe lycke good.

There buth mony lolerdys y-take in diverse scheris of this contrey as y hyrd say now late of trew men.

Sum gay squyere of Davynschere schal wed my dowghter, the weche go to schole upon the Newgate.

The sentences seem to be framed, not just as a prose exercise, but also as subjects for lively class discussion.<sup>25</sup> However good they might be, such schools lasted only as long as the master, and the teaching depended on his talents and his temper. Londe died on 23 February, 1462, according to the brass which used to be in St. Peter's Church, where he was buried, and William Worcester who may have been his pupil, noted in 1480 that the Newgate school had closed.<sup>26</sup>

In Redcliffe parish in the 1480s was the school of John Fosse to which the merchant, John Peers, "one of the cheif jewelerz of the said Toun," sent his son Thomas. Peers had asked Fosse, "divers tymes and many to teche and instructe" young Thomas in his "gramere till such tyme as he had his perfecte congruete." However, when Fosse required payment for his labours, Peers accused him of beating and ill-treating the boy, and even an action in the Bristol Tolzey Court failed to make him pay the fee. Either the merchant was cheating or Fosse was one of the "incompetent schoolmasters" deplored by Thomas More and

25 N. Orme, *Education in the West of England*, 39–40. N. Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (1973) plates 3, 9, 10.

26 N. Orme, *Education in the West of England*, 39–40.

Roger Ascham, "who prefer caning their pupils to teaching them."<sup>27</sup>

By 1513, with the Newgate school long closed, a new school had been opened, this time over Frome Gate. The Master was Thomas Moffat who lived in Christmas Street. The town Chamberlain's accounts are extant from 1532 and show Moffat still teaching there, the Council allowing him the room rent free, perhaps in return for taking some poor pupils without fees.<sup>28</sup> That year Robert Thorne, his brother Nicholas and John Goodrich, the rector of Holy Trinity Church, bought the Hospital of the Bartholomews in Christmas Street and all its lands and property, with the intention of building a "convenient Schole house for a fre grammar scole to be tawght and kepte within the town of Bristowe or within the subarbes of the same." The poor almsmen were to remain in the Hospital, receiving each 5d. a week, obits were to be said for the founder every 11 October and the scholars were to say prayers for him every morning and evening. A Charter was obtained from the King but Robert Thorne did not live to build his new school nor to see its statutes established. The entry of his will in the Great Orphan Book is dated 17 May, 1532 and includes bequests to the school and to master Moffat and his son. In the event, it was hardly a new foundation, for Master Moffat merely moved his school across from Frome Gate to the Bartholomews. Nevertheless, the Charter and Thorne's bequests created a permanent institution under the supervision of the town council, unlike the private, ephemeral and mainly fee-paying schools of earlier years.<sup>29</sup>

The lands of the Bartholomews were said to have been worth £40 a year and Robert Thorne was supposed to have promised a further £400 for the rebuilding. He died a wealthy man but it was always difficult to recover the property of a rich merchant. Much of it was in property or merchandise which might have to be sold cheaply; some lay in foreign countries; much in debts which were

27 C1/61/390. Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. Paul Turner (1965) 44. Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster* in *Works*, ed. W. Aldis Wright (Cambridge, 1970) 175-6.

28 B(ristol) M(unicipal) C(harities) 163/1,2,3. B.R.O. 04026(1)140-1; 04026(2)13, 85, 210, 319. B.R.O. 04421(1)a 261v-263r. C.P. Hill, *The History of Bristol Grammar School* (1951) 1-2, 7-8.

29 W.A. Sampson, *Bristol Grammar School* (Bristol, 1912) 52-6. SP1/40/219. C4/52 an unnumbered parchment.

paid slowly or never. Law suits between Nicholas and Emanuel Lucar, Robert's executor, and between Nicholas and John Goodrich illustrate the difficulties which arose.<sup>30</sup> It seems unlikely that much money was made available even for the repair or rebuilding of the old hospital. Unlike his brother, Nicholas seems to have been cautious, severe, perhaps mean. An anonymous letter once characterised him as a "nigard,"<sup>31</sup> but it must be borne in mind that, unlike Robert, he had a large family to provide for and his sons and grandchildren seem to have been even more determined not to relinquish what they obviously regarded as their rightful inheritance.<sup>32</sup>

In his own will in 1546 Nicholas left money for repairs at the school and £20 to hire a lawyer to see that the lands were vested in the Mayor and Commonalty, so he obviously foresaw trouble. He also left £30 to make a library there and all his own books, charts and maps, his astrolabe and "such Instrumentes as is in my house belonging to the science of astronomy or cosmogrocie."<sup>33</sup> Since his father may have sailed with the Cabots and his brother had written a treatise on exploration while he was living in Seville, and since Nicholas' own trade extended to the Atlantic Islands and Crete, these books, maps and instruments may well have been of unusual interest. A catalogue of the school library in 1725 merely contains a selection of the classical works, mainly Latin and Greek, studied in most grammar schools from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.<sup>34</sup>

From this time the salaries of the Master and the Usher were paid by the city Council and form an almost unbroken series in the Chamberlain's accounts.<sup>35</sup> The Master was to be an M.A. of two years' standing, learned in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and for most of the century he was paid £20 a year.<sup>36</sup> Usually the

30 C1/911/27-9, C1/1079/12-14, C1/1162/26-28.

31 B.L. Cotton MS. Cleop. E v 361.

32 B.M.C. 163/4-11. C.P. Hill, *op. cit.* 15-19. Req/2/39/90.

33 B.R.O. 04421(1)a 272v-277v.

34 R.H. Tawney and E. Power, eds. *Tudor Economic Documents* (1924) ii, 19-23. J.M. Vanes, *The Overseas Trade of Bristol in the Sixteenth Century*, B(ristol) R(ecord) S(ociety) xxxi (1979) 161. Sampson, *op. cit.* 108-12.

35 B.R.O. 04026(14) *passim*.

36 B.R.O. 04264(6)151-3, the Grammar School Ordinances, 26 February, 1667. These differ very little from those published in N. Carlisle, *A Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales* (1818) i, 404-11.

masters seem to have been M.A. from Oxford, for example Mr. Thomas Turner, M.A. of Magdalen College, Oxford, who came to Bristol in the summer of 1566 from Chipping Campden School and stayed until 1570, and Mr Alexander Woodson, M.A. of Christ Church, who was Master from 1584 to the end of the century.<sup>37</sup> The Usher, who received £10 a year and taught the Lower School, was to be a B.A. of 2 years' standing, well learned in Latin and Greek, "sober and qualified in all points according to the laws of this Kingdom."<sup>38</sup>

Nicholas Thorne's will required his executors to see "that the said ordinances and rules for the said free scole of the Bartilmewes in the said city of Bristowe be made to bring upp youthe in vertuose customes and maners as well as in there lerning."<sup>39</sup> An agreement between his son and the Council in 1561 mentions particularly "grammar and other good littatures" and "knowledge of the laten tongue --- and that frelie withoutt anything to be taken other then fower pence onlie for the first admission of every Scholer into the same Schole." By 1667 the 4d. had become 5s. with 1s. for fire every winter and 2d each quarter for sweeping the school. Free entry was restricted to sons of freemen of the city, though the master was allowed paying pupils in addition.<sup>40</sup>

The boys entered the school between the ages of nine and thirteen and went into the Lower School to be taught by the Usher. In many schools, certainly at the Cathedral School in Bristol, forms 1, 2 and 3 were the "Lower School," on the ground floor with the Usher, while the Master taught forms 4, 5 and 6 upstairs. The boys sat on forms on three sides of the room, the master's desk was on the fourth side. At the Cathedral School the Usher had a table and chair downstairs, the Master a desk in the room above.<sup>41</sup> The school master appears in drawings of the time, sitting in a large elaborately carved chair, capped and

37 A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, 1501-1540*, (Oxford, 1974) J. Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis, 1500-1714*, A. Clark, *Register of the University of Oxford*, (Oxford, 1889) ii.

38 Payments to Masters and Ushers are in B.R.O. 04026(1)-(14), the Chamberlains' accounts.

39 B.R.O. 04421(1)a, 272v-277v.

40 B.M.C. 163/5. B.R.O. 04264(6) 151-3, Ordinances.

41 E.T. Morgan, *A History of the Bristol Cathedral School* (Bristol, 1913) 26-30.

gowned, book in hand, a group of pupils gathered around his feet, their books open, and behind the Master's chair a fearsome collection of birch rods. The sixteenth century was a violent age when hands went quickly to sword or dagger and the general opinion, quoted in sermons of the day was, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Probably a good many lads were like Shakespeare's schoolboy,

"with his satchel  
And shining morning face, creeping like snail  
Unwillingly to school."<sup>42</sup>

One little lad, though not in Bristol, admitted that on his way to school he "did slide upon the ice, cast snow, fought with his fists and balls of snow, scourged his top, played for pennies, cherry stones, counters, dice and cards."<sup>43</sup>

The Ordinances stipulated that the boys should be able to read English on entry to the school. With the Usher they learned Latin, starting in the first form with the parts of speech and all the rules of grammar. This work continued in the second and third forms, memorising the grammar, parsing and "making their latins," the short sentences of translation or of their own composition which appear in Robert Londe's lesson preparation. They probably read Aesop's *Fables* in Latin and possibly Cato's *Disticha Moralia*, which John Frampton read on board ship, or some other book of *Sententiae Pueriles*, proverbs or the sayings of wise men. The prescribed grammar book was Lily's *Latin Grammar*, prepared originally for St. Paul's School and still in use in the Bristol Grammar School in 1816 as the Eton Grammar.<sup>44</sup> The School Library of 1725 included the *Adagia* of Erasmus, his *De Copia Rerum et Verborum*, his *Epistles*, *In Praise of Folly* and *Mirror of a Christian Prince*. Another book in the School library was the *Progymnasmata* of Apthonius, a book dating back to the fourth century, but still in the Renaissance, one of the most widely used text books of Latin composition,

42 Richard Whitford, *Werke for Householders* (1530). W. Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ii, 7.

43 Craig R. Thompson, "Schools in Tudor England," in L.B. Wright and V. La Mar, *Life and Letters in Tudor and Stuart England*, 287-334.

44 B.R.O. 04264(6)151-3 Ordinances 1667. N. Carlisle, *op. cit* i, 404-11. W.A. Sampson, *The Bristol Grammar School*, 108-12.

consisting of a series of fourteen exercises designed for classroom use.<sup>45</sup> Latin dictionaries were available. A famous English-Latin Dictionary called the *Promptorium Parvulorum* was often bound with the Latin-English dictionary known as the *Ortus Vocabulorum*. The copy of the *Promptorium* in Bristol Reference Library, printed by Pinson in 1499, is bound in with a Latin history of the world based on the Old Testament with drawings of Adam and Eve, the Ark and the Tower of Babel. This was still in use in 1599 and the end-papers are covered with children's scribble.<sup>46</sup>

In the Upper School the Master gave the boys constant practice in preparing themes in Latin, with speeches for and against some abstract proposition or an existing law. In their speeches and in the composition of letters they were no doubt encouraged to imitate the style of Cicero, several of whose works were in the 1725 Library. This was all part of the rhetorical training which stressed methodical preparation, style, arrangement and clear and forceful expression.<sup>47</sup> Boys were often encouraged to keep their own commonplace books in which they noted vivid or useful Latin phrases, figures of speech or stories for future use. In some schools boys were supposed to speak only Latin in school and were punished if they were heard conversing in English, but this rule does not appear in the Bristol Grammar School statutes. In the Upper School boys who were apt began the study of Greek and the few who stayed on into the Sixth Form and were destined for University might learn some Hebrew. Books which might be studied in the Upper School included some of the works of Terence, Virgil, Martial, Plautus, Lucian, Horace, Cicero, Plato, Homer, Aristotle and Aristophanes, all of which were represented in the 1725 Library. Historical books there included Herodotus, Xenophon, Tacitus, Livy, Plutarch and Silius Italicus and Geography was represented by the early medieval works of Ptolemy and Strabo. If there had ever been early sixteenth

45 F.R. Johnson, "Two Renaissance Text Books of Rhetoric —," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vi (1943-4) 427-44.

46 Bristol Central Library, *Catalogue of Early English Printed Books 1499-1640*.

47 Roger Ascham, *The Scholemaster*, 183-7, 238-75. Leonard Cox, *The Art or Craft of Rhetoric* in E. Nugent (ed.) *The Thought and Culture of the English Renaissance*, i. (The Hague, 1969) 139-42. Cox, headmaster at Reading, was interested in the foundation of the school, SP1/84/24.

century books of geography and astronomy in the Grammar School Library, they had disappeared by 1725.<sup>48</sup>

An important part of the boys' rhetorical training included the acting of plays, which was rightly regarded as a very beneficial activity for adolescent boys, giving them more proficiency in latin and English, as well as grace and self-confidence in speech and movement; a confidence much needed by those who might later hold important positions in town and guild, in the Law Courts, in Parliament or even overseas. Most of these boys were not to be "Governors" as Sir Thomas Elyot understood the term, but many of them had important parts to play in their own trades and in local affairs.<sup>49</sup> Westminster and Shrewsbury Schools were particularly famous for their plays and in many grammar schools the performance of a scene from Terence or Seneca was a weekly exercise.<sup>50</sup> The Bristol boys seem to have given public performances fairly regularly at Christmas time, at least from 1569, when the Chamberlain allowed the Master £2 for the cost of his "pageants" at the school. At the end of the century, the boys usually made orations before the Mayor and Common Council at Michaelmas and on the Queen's Accession Day, November 17. When Queen Elizabeth visited Bristol in 1574, her procession stopped outside Frome Gate where a platform had been erected at the entrance to the school. There three boys representing "Salutation," "Gratulation" and "Obedient Good Will" prepared to welcome her in rhyming couplets. However, the Queen cut short the ceremony and went on to the Great House and supper with John Young.<sup>51</sup>

Orthodoxy in religion was much stressed. Late in the sixteenth century, "An Othe for a Schoole Master" was copied into the back of the Council Ordinance Book. It is not known whether this was administered to all the school masters in the City, who would in any case be required to accept the Oath of Supremacy and would be licensed by the Bishop. The oath in the Ordinance

48 W.A. Sampson, *The Bristol Grammar School*, 108-12.

49 J. Simon, *The Social Origins of English Education*, (1970) 80-5.

50 A.F. Leach, *Educational Charters and Documents*, 519. W.H. Woodword, "English Universities, Schools and Scholarship in the Sixteenth Century, " *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. A.W. Ward & A.R. Waller (Cambridge, 1909) 424-5, 430.

51 B.R.O. 04026(9) 24, (10) 146, (12) 145, 205, 273, (13) 23. J. Nicholls (ed.), *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, i (1823) 396-408.

Book required the master to promise not to criticise, publicly or privately, any government order, "ryte or ceremony by lawe established and retayned within the Churche of England." He was to attend church diligently, "and none other assemblyes, meetings or conventicles whatsoever." The master had also to promise to instruct his pupils "in due obedyence to hir Majestie and the lawes heere in Englande established and likewise to all others in authority."<sup>52</sup> The Grammar School Library of 1725 included copies of the Bible, the Psalter and Erasmus' *Commentaries on the Epistle of St. Paul*, as well as some of the works of the early Fathers and of Reformation leaders including Calvin, Bullinger and Melanchthon.<sup>53</sup> The boys attended school every Saturday morning for their Catechism. The prescribed text was that of Alexander Nowell, a sixteenth-century Dean of St. Paul's, which was still being used at the school in 1667 and in 1816, "Latin and Greek in the Upper School; the church Catechism in Latin for those of capacity in the Lower School, and in English for the rest." On Sundays the scholars were to go to Church morning and evening and all the boys in the Upper School and those in the Lower who could write were to take notes of the sermon to bring to school on Monday morning, "and such as cannot write giving some other account to the masters." The School did not teach writing but Thursday and Saturday afternoons were set aside for boys to go to the "writinge Schoole," possibly a small group taught by one of the scriveners in the city.<sup>54</sup>

The school day was a long one governed mainly by the hours of daylight, as for most working people. By five on a summer morning, "the streets are full of people ---, the scholars are up and going to school, and the rods are ready for the truant's correction. By six the shops are open and the schoolboy hard at his Latin and Greek." At the Grammar School the boys were at school from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in spring and autumn and from 8 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. in the winter, with two hours, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for dinner. As laid down by the founder, each day began and ended with prayers and a

52 B.R.O. 04072 fo. 75v.

53 W.A. Sampson, *The Bristol Grammar School*, 108-12.

54 B.R.O. 04264(6) 151-3, Ordinances. N. Carlisle, *op. cit*, i, 404-11.

chapter of the Bible read by one of the boys.<sup>55</sup>

The number of boys in the school in the sixteenth century is not recorded but by 1700 there were about 50, 80% of whom went into the professions, trade or some kind of business. In the sixteenth century very few Bristol boys went to the University and it seems probable that a similar percentage left the Bristol schools for some kind of apprenticeship.<sup>56</sup> For the other Bristol schools there is much less information available and all except the Cathedral School were founded much later in the century. All possibly shared in some degree the same aims and followed largely the same timetable and curriculum as the Grammar School, though perhaps without the more advanced work of the fifth and sixth forms. The Cathedral School was re-founded at the Reformation by the Cathedral Statutes of 5 July, 1544, which provide for a choir school and a grammar school.<sup>57</sup> There were to be six choristers and a choir master "of a good life and conversation, skilful both in singing and playing upon the Organs, who shall diligently spend his time in instructing the boys in playing upon the organ and at proper times in singing Divine Service." There was also to be a Precentor "handsomely to direct the singing men in the Church and as a guide to lead them by his previous singing that they make no discords when they sing."<sup>58</sup> The Cathedral School was to have a Master and an Usher; the master to be "Skilful in Greek and Latin, of good fame and godly life, well qualified for teaching, who may train up in piety and good learning those children who shall resort to our school to learn grammar." The Usher was also to be "of good repute and virtuous life, well skilled in the latin tongue and hath a good faculty in teaching, who shall instruct the youth under the Headmaster in the first rudiments of grammar and shall therefore be called the under-master or Usher."<sup>59</sup> The Master received £13.

55 Nicholas Breton, *Fantastickes* (1626), cited in W.G. Hoskins, "Provincial Life," *The Shakespeare Survey*, A. Nicoll (ed.) (Cambridge, 1964) 17. B.R.O. 04264(6) 151-3, Ordinances.

56 W.A. Sampson, *The Bristol Grammar School*, 101-2. Sampson was able to trace only nine Bristol boys at Oxford, 1566-91, p. 263.

57 J. Britton, *The History and Antiquities of the Abbey and Cathedral Church of Bristol* (1830) 22. E.T. Morgan, *A History of Bristol Cathedral School* (Bristol, 1913) 15-17.

58 B.R.O. DC/A/7/1/1 Charter, DC/A/7/1/2,3, Statutes, section 25.

59 B.R.O. DC/A/7/1/2,3, Statutes, section 26.



Robert Thorne  
from a portrait in Bristol Grammar School

*Photograph: Gordon Kelsey*

From the Register of Apprentices 1532-65, p. 405 (Bristol Record Office: 043521). Note the arrangement of sending the apprentice to school.



Reliquorū autē metallorū uenae in fornacib, nō excoquūtur, sed argēti u  
ui, ut etiā stibij, in ollis: plūbi cinerei, in canalibus. Sed primō dicā de argēto  
F 4 uiuo;

Working on metal. Taken from Georgeus Agricola, *De Re Metallica*. Copy in Bristol Record Office 04569.

Photograph: Gordon Kelsey



Queen Elizabeth I handing the charter for Queen Elizabeth's Hospital to the Bristol merchants.

Reproduced by kind permission of the Trustees of Bristol Municipal Charities.

Photograph: Gordon Kelsey

6s. 8d. a year, the Usher £6. 13s. 4d. and each received an allowance for food and cloth for a gown. This was perhaps not adequate, since for much of the century there was no Usher, the Master doing all the teaching and receiving the full £20 himself.<sup>60</sup>

It may be that the school was not very flourishing in the sixteenth century. None of the masters stayed long and there were some breaks in the teaching. There is evidence that it was necessary to grease several palms to obtain the post of Master, and Griffith Hughes, the Master from 1587–1591, clearly found conditions unsatisfactory and was eventually dismissed. In the 1540s Henry VIII allowed the Cathedral an extra £20 a year for three years to rebuild the school which was said to be “run to ruin, waste, out of repair and unsightly,” but there is no evidence of repairs carried out at that time. Only in 1581–2 are there detailed accounts of extensive repairs to the school-house, a desk for the Master in the Upper School, old forms given new backs, tables mended and new glass and bars provided for the windows.<sup>61</sup> For many years the Bishopric was held in commendam with that of Gloucester and it may be that, in spite of the occasional visitations of the Dean and Chapter, the school was never very efficient.

The School at Redcliffe which received its Charter from the Queen in 1571 also remained small and seems generally to have had only one master. There is evidence of an earlier school in the parish in the 1550s, so again this may not be an entirely new foundation, but rather an attempt to put an existing school on a more permanent basis.<sup>62</sup> It was to be called “The Free Grammar and Writing School of Queen Elizabeth”; it was to have a master and an usher and twelve governors were named, appointed for life, who were to buy lands for the maintenance of the school, to appoint the masters and, with the Mayor’s approval, to make statutes for the government of the school. When the Queen visited the City three years later, the school had been set up in the Chapel of the Holy Spirit in the Churchyard of St. Mary

60 B.R.O. DC/A/12/1 Appointment of Minor Officials. E.T. Morgan, *Bristol Cathedral School*, 17–22, 31–3.

61 Req. 2/217/58. E.T. Morgan, *op. cit.* 26–30, 31.

62 *Cal. Pat. Elizabeth, v. (1569–72)* 165–6, C 66/1071/1344, 13 June, 1571. B.L. Egerton MS. 2044/36 fo. 34. B.R.O. Catalogue of an Exhibition to mark the 400th Anniversary of the School.

Redcliffe. There are later references to the school and, in the early seventeenth century, John Whitson made a bequest to the master, "he being an honest and learned scholler and endeavouring to sett forward poor freemen's children of the said City in the English and latin tongues."<sup>63</sup>

It is more difficult to trace the history of the so-called "School in the Marsh" for mariners' children. Such a school, together with an almshouse for aged sailors, was supposed to have been set up in the fifteenth century at the Bartholomews as part of the seamen's guild of St. Clement and St. George.<sup>64</sup> A Chapel of St. Clement was later built on a corner of the Marsh near the Back, which the Merchants took over when they built their guildhall in the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>65</sup> In the 1560s various bequests were made to a school in the Marsh for orphans and then in 1595 the Privy Council wrote to the Mayor and Aldermen that they were informed that "in tymes past" there had been an almshouse "for the relief of aged and impotent saylers" and "also a free schoole for mariners' children." They urged the Bristol Council to continue to levy the rate of 1½d. per ton on merchants' goods and 1d. in the £ of sailors' wages on all voyages so that these charities might be maintained.<sup>66</sup> During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries small payments were made by the Merchant Venturers' Company for a schoolmaster and the maintenance of a writing school in a room in the Merchants' Hall. There is also a record of the teaching of navigation there in 1618–19 and of a school of navigation set up there in 1727.<sup>67</sup>

In the last quarter of the sixteenth century the City passed through a period of great strain. The cloth industry was profoundly affected by the long wars on the Continent, the movement of much of the industry into the countryside and the increasing monopoly of trade by the London merchants. An

63 B.R.O. 04421(3)a 245r.

64 F.B. Bickley, *The Little Red Book of Bristol* (1900) ii, 186–92, Ordinances for Masters and Mariners of Ships.

65 R.H. Warren, "Medieval Chapels of Bristol," *B. & G.A.S.* xxx (1907) 181–211. P. McGrath, *The Merchant Venturers of Bristol* (Bristol, 1975) 17–19. B.R.O. 04421(1)a 293, 294–6.

66 *Cal. S.P. Dom. Elizabeth*, cciv, 6, 1595.

67 P. McGrath, *op. cit.* 30, 84, 215–17. P. McGrath, *Records Relating to the Merchant Venturers of the City of Bristol in the Seventeenth Century* B.R.S. xvii (1952) 113–17.

increase in the population, followed by severe famine and outbreaks of plague almost certainly meant numbers of homeless and destitute children. The old schoolroom over Frome Gate had long remained empty and had become very damp, perhaps almost derelict. In the autumn of 1589 the Council set in hand extensive repairs to provide "a schole house to teache Children to knit --- wosted hosen" there. Coals were provided by the Council and one must suppose that this was part of the city's system of poor relief, rather than a genuine school or apprenticeship scheme. However, it may well have prepared some of these children for a craft apprenticeship eventually.<sup>68</sup>

It was probably these conditions in Bristol and his own observation of the working of Christ's Hospital in London that caused John Carr to leave his property for the foundation of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital in Bristol in 1586.<sup>69</sup> Lady Mary Ramsey, who gave £1,000 "towards the maintenance of the hospital of Bristow where I was born," had earlier set up the writing school at Christ's Hospital to which boys who were to be apprenticed were sent from the petty school there.<sup>70</sup> A petition from the Council secured the Queen's Charter in 1587 which was later confirmed by Act of parliament.<sup>71</sup> The original intention was to take young orphan boys into a petty school, from which they would go on to a grammar school within the same foundation. Clever boys would be prepared for University and the less able would go into apprenticeships within the town.<sup>72</sup> The property which Carr left and the subsequent donations of many individual citizens, then and later, were not wisely managed separately from the Council's own properties. The will was disputed by Edward Carr, John's brother, and by tenants of Congresbury, Carr's country estate, leading to expensive suits in Chancery and Star Chamber and the

68 B.R.O. 04026(12) 126, 141, 190.

69 J. Jones, *Further Report on the Accounts of the Corporation of Bristol as the Late Governors of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital* (Bristol, 1840). W.A. Sampson, *The History of Queen Elizabeth's Hospital, Bristol* (Bristol, 1910) F.W.E. Bowen, *Queen Elizabeth's Hospital Bristol, The City School* (Clevedon, 1971).

70 N. Carlisle, *op. cit.* ii, 20. Foster Watson, *The English Grammar Schools to 1660*, 185.

71 B.L. Lansdowne MS. 61/74. Charter held at the office of B.M.C., Statute 39 Elizabeth c. 1.

72 The translation of the Charter in F.W. Bowen, *op. cit.*, 177-8.

borrowing of large sums of money in London at high rates of interest. Later, successive governors and treasurers were temporary appointees, usually city councillors, who had their own businesses to attend to and did not always manage the Congresbury estate to the advantage of the school. The original plan was forgotten and, like the Grammar School, The Queen Elizabeth's Hospital always educated many fewer boys than was the founder's intention.<sup>73</sup>

The school opened in 1590 with only 12 scholars the first quarter's allowance of £12. 10s. 0d. being paid to the overseers, Richard Smith and John Young, on Christmas Eve together with £10 collected by John Roberts from an imposition levied on imports.<sup>74</sup> The boys were settled in the House of the Gaunts on College Green, where a great deal of work had been done, as well as in the Gaunts' Chapel next door, to prepare them for the use of the school.<sup>75</sup> By the 1620s there were 24 boys, generally taught on Grammar School lines. The Treasurers' Books contain frequent payments for paper and books, including grammar books and primers and there is evidence of the boys giving orations on the visit of the Mayor each year. One or two boys went on to the university and one was transferred to Winchester, but most were apprenticed in the town with a premium of £2. to the master craftsman accepting them.<sup>76</sup>

Apprenticeship was itself an important part of education in Tudor England, perhaps to be compared with training in modern Polytechnics and technical colleges. This was well understood by the sixteenth century guilds which, besides controlling the number of apprentices, appointed wardens one of whose duties was to see that apprentices were properly instructed. Nor could any apprentice receive the freedom of guild or city unless his master accompanied him to testify to his competence, as well as to his good behaviour.<sup>77</sup> Edmonde Coote, in writing *The English Schoolmaster* in 1596, aimed to help the master craftsman with apprentices to teach. "I am now to direct my speech to the unskilful, which desire to make use of it for their own private

73 J. Jones, *op. cit. passim*. C 2/C Elizabeth/22/47. STAC 5/Elizabeth A 5/9.

74 B.R.O. 04026(12) 206; 04272, ff. 66r, 70r.

75 B.R.O. 04026(12) 160.

76 J. Jones, *op. cit.*, 81-2.

77 F.B. Bickley, *The Little Red Book*, i, 37-8.

benefit; and to such men and women of trade, as tailors, weavers, shop keepers, seamsters and to such other as have taken the charge of others."

Usually the apprenticeship would be arranged between the father and the prospective master and the boy then left home and went to live in his master's house. The indenture was sealed in the presence of the Mayor and enrolled by the Chamberlain within one year and the boy was then presented by his master to the guild so that the enrolment could be approved by the Master and Wardens and registered in the guild records. Thus the system enabled both the city and the guild to control the numbers entering each trade and to register those who might be eligible for freedom.<sup>78</sup> Both town and national regulations specified a minimum of 7 years apprenticeship, so that guild members were protected against the competition of cheap labour and guilds could ensure adequate training and the maintenance of standards. In Bristol the age of apprentices varied widely, but most were between 9 and 16 at entry and the length of apprenticeship was generally between 7 and 10 years, though it might be considerably more. A longer period might include some voyages as purser on the master's ship and would often end with a year or two abroad, usually in Spain and this is sometimes specified in the indenture.<sup>79</sup> In return for his master's care and teaching, the young man promised to work diligently and behave soberly; to guard his master's secrets and his goods; not to frequent gaming houses and not to marry without his master's consent. Two suits were to be provided, one for Sundays and the other for working days, and the prescribed dress for the apprentice was a "flat round cap, hair cut close, narrow falling band, coarse side coat, cloth hose and cloth stockings."<sup>80</sup>

The apprentice must not leave his master's house and to entice

78 For example, F.F. Fox, *Some Account of the Ancient Fraternity of Merchant Taylors of Bristol* (Bristol, 1880) 42–52. Statute 5 Elizabeth c. 4. G. Unwin, *Industrial Organisation in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1972) 138. O.J. Dunlop & R.D. Denman, *English Apprenticeship and Child Labour* (1912) 45, 47.

79 D Hollis (ed.) *A Calendar of the Bristol Apprentice Book, 1532–1565, Part i, 1532–1542*, B.R.S. xiv (Bristol, 1949). E. Ralph and N.M. Hardwick, *op.cit.*

80 Hollis, *Calendar*, 7, 67. T. Phaer, *A newe boke of Presidents* (1543) 62. B.R.O. P. St. J.B./D 217, an indenture. M.H. Curtis, "Education and apprenticeship," *Shakespeare Survey*, (1964) 53–73.

an apprentice from his master was a serious offence, often involving a charge of the theft of trade secrets and there were severe penalties for the apprentice who stole his master's goods.<sup>81</sup> London guild records include some horrifying instances of cruelty, but there are few in the Bristol records. Christopher Whitson was involved in a long case in which he was accused of beating a young apprentice and leaving him alone in the house for days without food. Neighbours testified that they had heard the child crying bitterly at night and had given him food.<sup>82</sup> Relations were clearly much dependent on the characters of the master and his wife, but it is obvious that the household atmosphere was often a happy one. A merchant's house could be a large establishment, with possibly three apprentices and several children. There might also be grooms or stablemen and a number of household servants. Much of the business was carried on in the house, so that there would be many callers and much to see and learn.

An important part of the training concerned the moral discipline of the young lad. For the sixteenth century merchant or master craftsman so much of his business depended on reputation and credit, that it was essential that the apprentices were brought up to be honest and hard-working. They were taught respect for authority, the necessity of restraining the temper, personal dignity, calm of manner, self-control, prudence and discretion. "His aim must be to make no enemies and acquire many friends." Communication skills were all important and education must develop judgment and strength of character. "He must be of good appearance, courteous, equable and not eccentric." He must be pragmatic and resourceful.<sup>83</sup> There were books on good manners, such as Alexander Barclay's *The Mirror of Good Manners* (1523) and Erasmus' *Lyttell Booke of Good Maners for Children* (1532) in which children were taught that learning and religion must be carried into everyday social life. There were manuals of conversation and collections of prayers for family and

81 C1/903/44, C2/C9/29, C1/79/43, Req 2/188/63, Req 2/7/152, Req 2/162/74. Statutes 21 Henry VIII c. 7, for example.

82 Req 2/188/63.

83 J. Simon, *The Social Origins of English Education* (1970) 77-88. S.L. Thrupp, *op. cit.* 164-6. Benedetto Cotrugli, *On Commerce and the Perfect Merchant* (1458) in R.S. Lopez and I.R. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World* (1955) 416-8.

private use. Books like *The Pathway to Prayer* (1542) ran into many editions. William Loe's *Merchants Manuell* (1628) was a pocket-sized book of advice and prayers which admonished the merchant to "Lend freely, looking for nothing againe," and was dedicated to the "Younglings in your society."<sup>84</sup> Books of sermons were popular and the metrical versions of the psalms in the many editions of Sternhold and Hopkins. Some of the Bristol apprentices must have heard Roger Edgeworth preaching in Bristol in the 1550s. Once he spoke directly to them. His advice was "to be obediente and subiecte to their lordes and maisters." Some masters were "good, vertuous and honest," others were severe, "crabbed, crooked and cumberous," some "hard, sore and cruell," but "you must do your duty and true service unto them," having a "lovinge feare" of your master and not displease him. "Be no Choplogikes," he said, "that will countersay their maisters, geving thre wordes for one."<sup>85</sup>

Many apprentices, particularly the large number of merchants, vintners, drapers, haberdashers and other entrepreneurs, began in the "counter" or counting-house, a small room described as "quiet or still and furnished with all things necessarie belonging unto the same, as bokis, paper, ynk, standish, pennes, pankniffe, wax, sealing thred, seale, etc."<sup>86</sup> The table, often covered with a carpet, was the great counting board, with squares like a chess-board and a raised edge. A box contained counters of various colours and sizes which were used on the board like the beads on an abacus frame. The skilled counting-house clerk became very quick at this and the apprentice, watching him and handing him the correct counters was said to be "learning the lines."<sup>87</sup>

There were many sixteenth century text books on arithmetic and accountancy. John Herford produced *An Introduction for to Lerne to Recken with the Penne or Counters* in 1537, based on

84 L.B. Wright, *Middle Class Culture in Elizabethan England* (1960) 121-39. K. Charlton, *Education in Renaissance England*, 200-3. W. Loe, *The Merchants Manuell* (1628) 46.

85 Roger Edgeworth, *Sermons very Fruitful, Godly and Learned* (1557) 183-7.

86 John Weddington, *A Breffe Instruction and manner howe to kepe merchantes bokes of accomptes* in B.S. Yamey, H.C. Edey and H.W. Thomson, *Accounting in England and Scotland, 1543-1800* (1963) 48.

87 A. Saporì, "The Culture of the Medieval Italian Merchant" in F.C. Lane and J.C. Riemersma, *Enterprise and Secular Change: Readings in Economic History*, (1953) 53-65.

French and Dutch originals. Robert Recorde's *Ground of Artes* appeared in 1543 and Humphrey Baker's *Wellspring of Sciences* in 1546. Thomas Masterson's *Second Book of Arithmetic* (1592) included for the young merchant, "needful questions applied to paying, receiving, buying, selling, bartering, exchanges, companies, interest," and many other useful examples.<sup>88</sup> Hugh Oldcastle's treatise on accountancy, *A Profitable Treatise* ---, (1543) was revised and re-issued by John Mellis in 1588, using some well-known Bristol names in his examples. James Peele's books on accountancy begin with a list of rules. The young merchant must write legibly, learn to cast his accounts accurately, sort bills and correspondence into boxes in date order, and keep all letters received and copies of those sent. He follows this with a description of the account books to be used and the method of double-entry book-keeping.<sup>89</sup>

Examples and explanations of many commercial and legal documents were to be found in Thomas Phaer's *New Boke of Presidents* (1543) and William West's *Symbolaeographia* (1594, 1598). Such books must have been invaluable, not only to the traders, but also to scriveners and notaries, since they included an explanation of the working of the Chancery Court and all the documents needed there, as well as the forms of innumerable documents used in everyday working and so replaced the former manuscript formulary or precedent books kept in each notary's office. In spite of printed books and local schools, there were still many people who required the services of a scrivener, and the scriveners were the men who turned to teaching writing. In Bristol, Hugh Harvey, "schoolmaster and scrivener," may have taught writing in the town.<sup>90</sup> There were also copy-books for practising hand-writing. Merchants were particularly insistent on the importance of receiving the latest information, so letter-writing was important, especially for young men going overseas and, besides the copy-books of letters, such as Angel Day's *The English Secretary* (1586), the young man going abroad might have

88 K. Charlton, *Education in the Renaissance*, 263-4. M.H. Curtis, "Education and Apprenticeship," *Shakespeare Survey*, ed. A. Nicoll, 53-73.

89 See B.S. Yamey, H.C. Edey and H.W. Thomson. *Accounting in England and Scotland*. J.M. Vanes, "Sixteenth Century Accounting," *The Accountant* (1967) 357-61.

90 H. Pirenne, "L'instruction des marchands au moyen age," *Annales d'Histoire Economique et Sociale*, i (1929) 13-28. B.R.O. 04421(1)a 387.

other aids, such as foreign language teaching, foreign language books and dictionaries.<sup>91</sup> At first he might have a "tutor" overseas, another English merchant or an older apprentice of the same master, to advise him. By the end of the century, Bristol men had their own hand-book, a very slim volume, but in the tradition of the great Italian manuals such as Pegolotti's *La Practica della Mercatura*. John Brown's *The Merchants Avizo* (1589) contains much good advice on manners and morals as well as model letters, commercial documents and a detailed description of commodities and currency.<sup>92</sup>

It may well be that other similar tracts circulated in manuscript, possibly the *Special Direction for Divers Trades* which details the best commodities to buy and sell in all the main areas of Bristol's trade, and also Guicciardini's *Description of Antwerp*, which was certainly known in England by the 1570s.<sup>93</sup> In Bristol, local regulations were enrolled in the Council records such as the *Ordinance Books* and the *Little Red Book*, with the Lex Mercatoria and the Sea Laws of Oleron. The rules for the Back Hall in Bristol were nailed up in the Hall, but the slow routine of the Hall and the brokers, the procedures of the local courts, and harbour and the custom house, fairs and markets, the chapmen and carriers, were learned by the apprentice from his master and the older apprentices in the slow rhythm of the annual routine.

A good standard of literacy was required by the Bristol Company of Barber-Surgeons and surgeons also needed latin. At the end of the sixteenth century they seem to have been numerous and well organised, with a Hall, dissecting rooms and examinations for apprentices. Their ordinances show a professional care for the well-being of the patient, the free treatment of the poor and the skill and dignity of their calling. All ships' surgeons were to bring their sea-chests to be examined by the Master of the Company and two other members, to make sure that they were adequate and contained "all things necessary for

91 K.G. Hornbeak, *The Complete Letterwriter in English, 1568-1800* (1934) 3-32. J. Robertson, *The art of Letter-Writing, an essay on the Handbooks published in England in the sixteenth & seventeenth centuries* (1942). K. Charlton, *op. cit.* 237-8. H.S. Bennett, *English Books & Readers*, ii, 176.

92 F.B. Pegolotti, *La Practica della Mercatura*, ed. A. Evans (Camb. Mass. 1936). 25 J. B(rown) *The Merchants Avizo*, ed P. McGrath (Boston, 1957).

93 R.H. Tawney and E. Power (eds.) *Tudor Economic Documents* (1924) iii, 199-210, 149-73, 184, 215.

the voyage.”<sup>94</sup> By the late sixteenth century, a great many books of anatomy and medicine were available, some of which were translations of works from the great school of anatomy at Padua, such as the *Compendiosa totius anatomy delineato* of Thomas Geminus in 1545. Others were simple pocket books for apprentices, such as Thomas Vicary’s *Englishmen’s Treasure* (1586). John de Vigo’s great work on surgery was translated by B. Treheron in 1543 and includes not only a study of anatomy, but the treatment of various diseases and ailments from Anthrax to Vertigo. He provides many herbal remedies and ointments, plasters and pills for the apothecary or the housewife dealing with burns, coughs, chilblains, earache, indigestion and dislocated limbs. Herbals were very popular and books had also begun to appear about “taking the waters” at Bath and other spas.<sup>95</sup>

Twenty-six girls were apprenticed as housewives during the years 1532–1552. We know little of what they learned except that many Bristol women had special skills. John Smythe’s mother wove the red cloth for which the West Country was famous. Some housewives were sufficiently educated to see that their girl apprentices could read, write and keep the accounts of a large household. Others kept common-place books of recipes and herbal remedies. Many households found a place for a copy of Vigo, Gerard’s *Herball* or the *Newe Herball* of William Turner (1551). At the turn of the century, Sir Hugh Platt wrote several books of house-keeping, herbal remedies and perfumes. Some of Gervase Markham’s books may have been used, particularly *Country Contentments or the English Housewife*. In 1584 *A Book of Cookry, now newly enlarged* was published and went through three more editions in the following ten years. The running of a large household, dealing with servants; the kitchen, the buttery, the stillroom and the linen press; tapestry, weaving, lace-making or embroidery; the care of household goods, furniture and plate; the health of the family, especially the care of babies and young children; possibly a herb garden or an orchard; chickens, pigs and

94 G. Parker, “Early Bristol Medical Institutions, the Medieval Hospitals and BarberSurgeons,” *B. & G.A.S.* xliv (1922), 155–78.

95 John Gerard, *The Herball, very much enlarged by T. Johnson*, (1633). H.S. Bennett, *English Books and Readers*, i, 97–106; ii, 179–89.

bee-hives: many of these may have been the young girl's concern.<sup>96</sup>

The choir boys at the Cathedral and possibly at some of the other churches learned to play the organ and to sing the metrical psalms of Sternhold and Hopkins and, later in the century the settings of Thomas Tallis, Christopher Tye, William Byrd, Thomas Weelkes and Orlando Gibbons. In 1597, Thomas Morley, "Bachelor of Musike and Gentleman of Her Majesty's Royal Chapel," published *A Plaine and Easie Introduction to Practicall Musicke* which, with other books of instruction, such as Adrien le Roy's *A brief and easy instruction to learn the tablature unto the Lute* — (trans. J. Alford, 1568) might help the minstrel apprentice. The other group who also learned to play an instrument were the apprentices of inn-keepers, who received viols, rebecks and shawms at the end of their apprenticeship. For them there were collections of madrigals, rounds, catches, canzonets, airs and ballads, composed or collected by such musicians as John Dowland, Thomas Weelkes, Orlando Gibbons and Thomas Ravenscroft.<sup>97</sup>

"In manual arts the master first showeth his apprentice what he is to do; next works it himself in his presence and gives him rules, and then sets him to work," wrote Obadiah Walker in his book *Of Education* (1673). This applies to the great number of Bristol apprentices in the cloth, leather, metal and building trades. Their instruction came also from guild and local regulations, which specified, for example, the materials to be used in soap-making and the sizes and marking of barrels, and from statutes, such as those which controlled the size and weight of various types of cloth. Such statutes were read aloud to guild members and then displayed in a public place with leather and nails.<sup>98</sup> A good many men were able to read and in 1586 Christopher Gower prepared for them his *Waye to Fayre Wrytinge*, "for the moore Redie use

96 G.E. Fussell, *The Old English Farming Books from Fitzherbert to Tull, 1523-1730* (1947) includes early works on gardening, bee-keeping and the management of poultry.

97 G. Reese, *Music in the Renaissance* (1954) 796-835. D.E. Mason, "Music in Elizabethan England," L.B. Wright & V.A. La Mar, *op. cit.* 145-84.

98 Obadiah Walker, *Of Education* (1673) cited by Foster Watson in *The beginnings of the teaching of Modern Subjects in England* (1909) xlii. R.B. Wernham and J.C. Walker, *England under Elizabeth (1558-1603) Illustrated from Contemporary Sources* (1932) 205.

and helpe of sundry Artificers that work in Metall, Stone, Tymber, Sylk Cloth, Tapestrye, etc." Crafts-men in metal and stone, such as master masons and carpenters, even the craneman and the gunner, the shipwright and the Bristol men who, during the century were interested in the working of Mendip lead, Somerset coal or Welsh iron needed to be literate and needed also some knowledge of arithmetic and geometry for making maps and plans. The *De re Metallica*, of Georgius Agricola and Cyprian Lucar's books, *Lucar's Solace*, and *Three Books of Colloquies concerning the arte of shooting*, like those of John Frampton, demonstrate the new, more practical and scientific attitude.<sup>99</sup>

This attitude is found also in the many books of navigation, with their rutters and sea-cards. In 1588 Anthony Ashley translated the work of Lucas Waghenaeer and published it as *The Mariners Mirror*, the first part a navigation manual, then an atlas of 23 charts with descriptions of the coasts and sailing directions, a list of geographical names in Dutch, French, Spanish and English and a table of the sun's declination with instructions for calibrating the cross-staff. Ashley also included an "Exhortation to Apprentices of the art of Navigation" on "how to attayn to the perfect skill and science of navigation." They must observe, memorise and record for themselves the various courses, bearings and soundings their masters employed in entering and leaving port, "for that which any man, either young or olde exerciseth, searcheth out and observeth himself sticketh faster in memory, then that which he learneth of others." It was a sentiment echoed in John Smith's *Accidence --- for all young seamen* (1626), "get some of these bookees, but practise is the best."<sup>100</sup>

Probably a great many sixteenth century professional men and craftsmen said as much to their apprentices and most Bristol schoolboys completed their education with a practical apprenticeship in some trade or profession. For many more, apprenticeship was their only education.

99 B.R.O. 04569, *De re Metallica* (Basle, 1561). Cyprian Lucar was the son of Robert Thorne's apprentice, Emanuel Lucar and held lands in Somerset. For the will of a mason see P. McGrath and M. Williams, *Bristol Wills, 1546-1593* (Bristol, 1975) 44.

100 E.G.R. Taylor, *The Haven-finding Art*, (1956), *The Mathematical Practitioners of Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, 1954). D.W. Waters, *The Art of Navigation in England in Elizabethan and Early Stuart Times* (1958) 170-1, xxxiii-iv.

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